

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 SAJ-01 IO-13 ARA-06 SAM-01

AID-05 FRB-03 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 L-03 H-02

DODE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 CU-02 INT-05 NEA-10 DHA-02 /134 W

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R 141650Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3655

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SEDU, SCUL, PINT, UK

SUBJECT: EAST IS EAST AND WEST IS WEST, BUT FOR THE TUC,
THE TWAIN DOTH MEET

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1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE "ECONOMIST FOREIGN REPORT" (A "CONFIDENTIAL" NEWSLETTER) OF JULY 1976 PROVIDES A USEFUL COMPENDIUM (BEING POUCHED) OF TUC DELEGATIONS WHICH TRAVELED TO COMMUNIST COUNTRIES FROM FEBRUARY 1975 TO THE END OF JUNE 1976. WHILE THE LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE, IT INCLUDES NEARLY 40 DELEGATIONS AT THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL WHICH HAVE VISITED THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN EASTERN EUROPE, AS WELL AS CUBA AND THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA. ABOUT 13 TRADE UNION DELEGATIONS FROM THE SOVIET UNION CAME TO BRITAIN IN 1975. THE MOST RECENT BRITISH DELEGATION, LED BY JACK JONES, SPENT JUNE 23-26 IN EAST GERMANY. INTERNATIONALLY, THE BRITISH TUC'S "DRANG NACH OSTEN" THUS CONTINUES UNABATED EVEN AS THE TUC TURNS INCREASINGLY TOWARD THE CENTER AND EVEN TO THE RIGHT IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS. END SUMMARY.

2. THESE DELEGATIONS ARE NOW SO ROUTINE THAT THEY ARE ONLY RARELY PUBLICIZED, ALTHOUGH AS THE ECONOMIST NEWSLETTER SUGGESTS, SINCE THE "SHELEPIN AFFAIR" LAST YEAR (WHICH SO EMBARRASSED THE TUC) THERE IS LITTLE INCLINATION BY THE BRITISH TRADE UNION LEADERS TO GIVE MUCH PUBLICITY TO THEIR VISITATIONS TO EASTERN EUROPE OR TO COMMUNIST COUNTRIES ELSEWHERE. IN FACT, THIS SORT OF TRAVEL HAS BECOME SO COMMONPLACE THAT A NUMBER OF VISITS -- PERHAPS MANY OF THEM -- ESCAPE THE ATTENTION OF THE TUC'S OWN INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

3. IN ADDITION TO THOSE WHICH DO COME TO THE ATTENTION OF MORE THAN AVERAGE INTERESTED OBSERVERS, SUCH AS THE ECONOMIST, THERE ARE SAID TO BE A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF INVITATIONS FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TO TRADE UNION LEADERS AS WELL AS RANK AND FILE MEMBERS OF UNIONS TO SPEND A HOLIDAY WITH THEIR FAMILIES AT BLACK SEA AND OTHER RESORTS. ALLAN HARGREAVES, A TUC INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT HEAD (ACCORDING TO A FCO SOURCE) AND ARTHUR SCARGILL, YORKSHIRE REGION LEADER OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINERS, ARE AMONG THE RECIPIENTS OF COMMUNIST LARGESSE. ALAN CUMMINGS, A YOUNG LOCAL LEADER FROM THE MODERATE DURHAM REGION OF NATIONAL UNION OF MINERS -- WHO IS NOW IN THE US ON A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHURCHILL SCHOLARSHIP -- TOLD US RECENTLY THAT THE SOVIETS USE SPECIAL OCCASIONS SUCH AS THE MINERS' STRIKE IN 1974 OR A TRAGIC MINE DISASTER TO INVITE MINERS' FAMILIES TO THEIR COUNTRY.

4. BY CONTRAST, THE NUMBER OF OFFICIAL DELEGATIONS TO THE US FROM VARIOUS LEVELS OF THE TUC APPEAR TO BE FEW IN NUMBER, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE UNDOUBTEDLY MANY TRADE UNION

OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS AMONG THE NUMEROUS BRITISH TOURISTS.
TO BE SURE, TUC DISPATCHES ITS FRATERNAL DELEGATES TO THE
AFL-CIO CONVENTIONS AND, UNTIL RECENTLY, TO THE WINTER
MEETINGS OF THE AFL-CIO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. THERE ARE AL-
SO DELEGATIONS SUCH AS THE GROUP FROM THE IRON AND STEEL
TRADES CONFEDERATION WHICH PARTICIPATED WITH OTHER
BRITISH UNIONISTS IN A RECENT CONFERENCE IN PITTSBURGH
OF THE INTERNATIONAL METALWORKERS FEDERATION. ADDITION-
ALLY, INDIVIDUAL VISITORS SUCH AS CLIVE JENKINS, HEAD OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL
STAFFS, AND MARK YOUNG, THE HEAD OF THE BRITISH AIR LINE
PILOTS, HAVE BEEN IN NEW YORK CITY RECENTLY AS OBSERVERS
AT THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION. JACK JONES, IN
FACT, WILL BE VISITING NEW YORK (JULY 21), WASHINGTON
(JULY 22) AND BOSTON (JULY 23) TO PARTICIPATE WITH OTHER
BRITISH FIGURES IN A NUMBER OF BBC SPECIAL BROADCASTS.
THERE MAY BE ALSO OTHER DELEGATIONS OR INDIVIDUAL LEADER

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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VISITS WHICH REMAIN UNREPORTED, BUT ON BALANCE IT WOULD
APPEAR THAT THE TRADE UNION FLOW BETWEEN BRITAIN AND
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EASTERN EUROPE IS MUCH LARGER THAN IS THE TRAFFIC BETWEEN
THE UK AND THE US.

5. THE FIRST TUC TOP-LEVEL VISIT TO EAST GERMANY TOOK
PLACE JUNE 23-26. THE GROUP WAS HEADED BY JACK JONES,
CHAIRMAN OF THE TUC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE; DAVID
BASNETT, THE MODERATE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE GENERAL
AND MUNICIPAL WORKERS UNION -- BRITAIN'S THIRD LARGEST
UNION; JOE GORMLEY, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF
MINERS; AND ALLAN HARGREAVES, THE HEAD OF THE TUC INTER-
NATIONAL DEPARTMENT. A TUC OFFICIAL WITH WHOM WE SPOKE
SAID THAT THE VISIT WAS OF NO SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE,
SIMPLY A ROUTINE CONTINUATION OF THEIR "NORMAL" EAST-WEST
EXCHANGES. THE TUC OFFICIAL'S VIEW WAS ECHOED BY DAVID
BASNETT WHO TOLD US THAT THE VISIT WAS A SIMPLE "GET-TO-
KNOW EACH OTHER" EXERCISE. (BASNETT SAID THE TRIP RECON-
FIRMED HIS VIEW THAT THE UNIONS WERE DOMINATED BY THE
STATE, BUT HE WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH THE DEGREE OF PROS-
PERITY HE WITNESSED.)

6. THE ECONOMIST NEWSLETTER DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT
STATES THAT THE "VISIT TO EAST BERLIN WAS CUT SHORTER
THAN THE EAST GERMANS WANTED, AND THE TUC DELEGATES DE-
CLINED TO VISIT ANY TOWNS OUTSIDE BERLIN." HOWEVER, THE
ECONOMIST ADDS "...AS REPORTED BY THE EAST GERMAN NEWS
AGENCY, ADN, MR. JONES SAID BEFORE LEAVING THAT HE 'FELT
AT HOME IN THE GDR AND PRAISED THE EAST GERMAN ECONOMIC
SYSTEM'." THE ECONOMIST ALSO REPORTED THAT JONES PRE-
SENTED, ON BEHALF OF THE TUC, AN INVITATION TO VISIT

BRITAIN TO HARRY TISCH, LEADER OF THE EAST GERMAN FDGB. THE TUC OFFICIAL DENIED THAT THE TWO TRADE UNION CENTERS HAD ISSUED A JOINT COMMUNIQUE, BUT HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE TWO GROUPS DID REFER TO THE CONVENING OF ANOTHER ALL-EUROPEAN (EAST-WEST) TRADE UNION CONFERENCE EARLY NEXT YEAR IN GENEVA, EMPHASIZING THAT THIS HAD ALREADY BEEN AGREED TO IN PRINCIPLE BY THE FOUR MEMBERS OF THE ILO GOVERNING BODY FROM BRITAIN, WEST GERMANY, NORWAY, AND THE SOVIET UNION. (ALTHOUGH ALLEN HARGREAVES INSISTS THAT THE DGB WAS "HAPPY" TO HAVE THE TUC VISIT EAST GERMANY, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO OBTAIN EMBASSY BONN'S APPRAISAL OF THE WEST GERMAN DGB ATTITUDE.) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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7. COMMENT: IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT BENEFITS HAVE ACCRUED TO THE BRITISH TUC (OR TO OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS FOR THAT MATTER) FROM THESE EXCHANGES. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT, ON THE WHOLE, THE TRAFFIC IN POLITICAL TERMS HAS BEEN A "ONE-WAY STREET." JACK JONES HAD DECLARED IN JUSTIFICATION OF THE TUC'S "DRANG NACH OSTEN" THAT "SOLIDARITY, UNDERSTANDING AND FRIENDSHIP ARE THE TRADE UNION ANSWER TO INTERNATIONAL TENSION." HE ADDS: "IT IS THE ULTIMATE ANSWER TO THE WORLD'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. IT IS THE ONLY WAY." OTHER UNION LEADERS HAVE ARGUED THAT THE COMMON ECONOMIC AND TRADE UNION PROBLEMS -- PARTICULARLY COUNTERVAILING POWER TO THAT OF THE GIANT MULTI-NATIONALS -- IS ANOTHER MAJOR REASON. THERE IS THE ARGUMENT, TOO, THAT CONTACTS WITH WESTERN DEMOCRATIC AND FREE TRADE UNIONISTS FROM DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES WILL ENCOURAGE LIBERATING AND DEMOCRATIC TENDENCIES WITHIN THE HOST UNIONS.

8. ON THE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE THUS FAR, THERE IS LITTLE TO INDICATE THAT THESE VISITS HAVE HAD ANY APPRECIABLE EFFECT ON DETENTE, ON COLLABORATION IN VITAL TECHNICAL AREAS, AND ABOVE ALL ON THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS IN EASTERN EUROPE. ON THE OTHER HAND THERE IS ABUNDANT EVIDENCE THAT THE E-W PROGRAMS OF THE WESTERN EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS HAVE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE RESPECTABILITY TO THEIR COUNTERPART ORGANIZATIONS (WITNESS THE USE MADE OF WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN A CASUAL REMARK BY JONES QUOTED IN PARA 6 ABOVE BY THE EAST GERMAN NEWS AGENCY ADN), HAVE BEGUN THE PROCESS OF EROSION OF WESTERN INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS, HAVE INHIBITED COMMON POLICIES ON SOME CRITICAL ISSUES BEFORE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES, HAVE DIVIDED EUROPEAN FROM AMERICAN LABOR, AND HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE SILENCE OF MANY BRITISH AND OTHER EUROPEAN TRADE UNION LEADERS IN THE FACE OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS IN COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. BRITISH

TUC EAST-WEST POLICY, WHICH HAS THE FULL AND ENTHUSIASTIC
SUPPORT OF THE LEFT-WING, IS IN SOME CONTRAST TO THE
TUC'S INCREASINGLY CENTRIST AND SOMETIMES RIGHT-WING DO-
MESTIC POLICY.

SPIERS

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